

VZCZCXRO2866  
PP RUEHGR  
DE RUEHBE #0140 0721511  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 121511Z MAR 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BELMOPAN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1152  
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICA COLLECTIVE  
RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BELMOPAN 000140

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EEB/IFD/OMA (ANDREW SNOW AND RICHARD FIGUEROA), WHA/CEN  
(ROIS BEAL), WHA/EPSC (PETER MAIER)

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [BH](#)  
SUBJECT: BELIZE RESPONSE TO REPORT ON FISCAL TRANSPARENCY

REF: State 16737

¶1. (SBU) The government of Belize publishes its annual budget on a compact disk that is made available upon request. It also publishes a summary of the budget on the government of Belize website. Revenues and expenditures are documented on the disk and website. However, politics often appears to play a role and all revenues and expenditures may not be included transparently in these publications, so the reliability is questionable.

¶2. (SBU) General elections were held in Belize on February 7 and resulted in a change in governing party. The previous government was repeatedly accused of corrupt activities, but no public officials have thus far been prosecuted for corruption-linked crimes. Lack of transparency has increased in recent years and both resource constraints and a general unwillingness to reveal details about government activities contributed to this. However, the government elected in early February has promised to open the books to the public and to ensure accountability.

¶3. (SBU) The U.S. provided an ethics speaker in 2007 and consistently raised awareness during outreach events of the need for greater transparency and accountability. Post is unaware of other programs offered by other donor countries regarding transparency.

¶4. (SBU) Belize has volunteered for the IMF to report on the country's compliance with standards and codes covering fiscal transparency. According to their website, the IMF visited Belize in December 2007 for the review.

DIETER